

The Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and VA Relay appreciate the recently filed Comments regarding the need for increased outreach efforts to potential Speech to Speech (STS) relay users.

At the Winter 2007 meeting of the Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC), members moved to focus on outreach activities for STS relay services for the remainder of the calendar year. In response to their request, Virginia Relay has completed the following media activities:

- Release of a new STS Brochure that includes instructions on how to use the service;
- Release of a new one-page STS flyer for dissemination by audiologists, speech pathologists and rehab counselors for their patients/clients;
- Print advertisement in the Brain Injury Association of Virginia's *Headway* newsletter;
- Print advertisement in the Speech and Hearing Association of Virginia's *SHAV-a-Gram*;
- Print advertisement in the Virginia Occupational Therapy Association's *VOTA Voice* periodical;
- Print inserts in *Stroke Connection* Magazine;
- Print inserts in *Stroke Smart* Magazine;
- On-Line banners appearing at www.Shav.org, www.Vaota.org, and www.larynxlink.org; and,
- Publication of the Summer/Fall 2007 issue of *The Commonwealth Caller*, the newsletter of VA Relay, which focused on STS relay services and included an interview with nationally-known STS advocate Rebecca Ladew, a complete description of STS relay, and a Q&A session with a STS Communications Assistance.

In addition to our STS media plan, sixteen local deaf and hard of hearing outreach specialists were in attendance at the Summer 2007 VRAC meeting, a meeting which was dedicated to STS relay. The agenda included instructions and demonstrations by VA Relay STS operators, a discussion on the importance of establishing relay Profiles for STS users, and a special appearance and presentation by Rebecca Ladew.

As we plan a follow-up discussion on STS outreach at our Spring 2008 VRAC meeting, I would like to invite you to attend and share any additional suggestions and ideas you may have for complimenting our recent efforts. Please contact us at 1-800-552-7917 or at frontdsk@vddhh.virginia.gov for the date and location of our next meeting.

Sincerely,
Clay Bowen
VDDHH Relay and Technology Programs Manager